

The Council of Europe

The Council of Europe is a political organisation which was founded on 5 May 1949 by ten European countries in order to promote greater unity between its members. It now numbers forty-seven European states.

The main aims of the organisation are to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and to develop common responses to political, social, cultural and legal challenges in its member states.



**Stop domestic
violence
against women**



www.coe.int/stopviolence

Stop violence against women

**Campaigning
through
regional
co-operation**



Working luncheon

*organised
by the Permanent Representative
of the Republic of San Marino
to the United Nations,
in co-operation
with the Council of Europe*

with the participation
of High Level Panellists

Wednesday 4 June 2008, 1.15pm

Delegates' Dining Room
West Terrace (4th floor)
United Nations Headquarters
New York



Violence against women is a violation of human rights. It is the result of an imbalance of power between women and men, leading to serious discrimination against women, both in society and within the family. It takes place in all parts of the world and in all segments of society.

In Europe, our research suggests a disturbing picture:

- One-fifth to one-quarter of all women have experienced physical violence at least once during their lives, and more than one-tenth have suffered sexual violence.
- As many as 45% of women experience some form of violence.
- Most violent acts against women are carried out by men in their immediate social environment, most often partners and ex-partners.
- It is estimated that about 12% to 15% of all women over the age of 16 have been in a relationship where they have experienced domestic abuse.
- Women are more likely to be attacked physically or sexually by former partners, showing that the protection offered is not secure enough at the end of an abusive relationship.
- The cost to society of domestic violence is enormous. Studies in individual countries have ranged from 2.4 billion euros per year in Spain, to 34 billion euros in the UK.

In May 2005 the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe

decided to set up a Task Force and launch a *Campaign to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence*.

A Campaign Blueprint developed by the Task Force serves as a roadmap for implementation of the Campaign. Aiming to achieve significant progress in the areas of legal and policy measures, support and protection for victims, data collection and awareness raising, the Campaign is based on the Council of Europe *Recommendation Rec (2002) 5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the protection of women against violence*. Member states are invited to carry out national campaigns in parallel or as a follow-up to the Council of Europe Campaign.

The campaign has the potential to change the lives of million of women across Europe. For instance, it has the potential to bring in laws across 47 countries that will mean that violent men are criminalised, that women and children are protected, and that survivors can stay in their homes and rebuild shattered lives with real practical support from the state. Most of all it will break the taboo of silence and help millions of women find a voice.

The Campaign was launched in November 2006 and will end with a closing conference on 10-11 June 2008. On this occasion, the Task Force will present its conclusions and assessment of measures and actions taken at national level to combat violence against women, including domestic violence, as well as its recommendations for future Council of Europe action in this field.

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Moderator: **HE Mr Daniele D. Bodini**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of San Marino
to the United Nations

Opening remarks: **HE Dr Asha-Rose Migiro**
Deputy Secretary-General
of the United Nations

HE Ms Maud de Boer Buquicchio
Deputy Secretary General
of the Council of Europe

Panellists include: **Ms Rachel Mayanja**
Special Adviser on Gender Issues
and Advancement of Women

HE Mr Gerhard Pfanzelter
Permanent Representative of Austria
to the United Nations

HE Ms Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti
Permanent Representative of Brazil
to the United Nations

HE Ms Byrganym Aitimova
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan
to the United Nations

HE Ms U. Joy Ogwu
Permanent Representative of Nigeria
to the United Nations

Questions and discussion